

REFUGEE

Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal

resettlement

Volume 5, Issue 2

March 2004

INNOVATIVE PROGRAM AT CENTER OF ARIZONA RRP RESTRUCTURING

When faced with the challenge to restructure its services in order to better meet the needs of its clients, the Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) stepped up to the challenge with a practical and innovative program.

This decision to make the changes and the direction those changes would take were based on information gathered from several sources: an analysis of currently offered services in Arizona and the availability of federal funding; group discussions with service providers regarding refugee needs; and a recent comprehensive research study conducted in both Phoenix and Tucson, the two major markets served by the Arizona RRP.

"RRP underwent this restructuring to respond to

the prevailing needs of refugees in Arizona who must achieve economic and social self-sufficiency," said Charles Shipman, State Refugee Coordinator. "The goal of the restructuring is to meet the needs of more refugees through quality service paradigms using the level of available funding."

As a part of the restructuring effort, the RRP believed it was very important to maintain its current refugee network infrastructure, but it was committed to funding programs that would deliver efficient, effective and high-quality services to refugees in Arizona. As a result, several agencies were awarded contracts for operating these new programs, and were encouraged to explore unique and cooperative approaches to the delivery of seamless services.

Under the restructuring, RRP continues to fund core Refugee Employability and Case Management services now referred to as Refugee Program. Services such as the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, Refugee Mental Health Services and Services to Elder Refugees will continue to respond to the needs of at-risk and vulnerable refugees.

continued on page 4

INSIDE

Letter from the State Coordinator	2
Coordination-Training	3
Thanksgiving Party	4
Coordination-Transportation	5
Children's Holiday Party	6
Coordination: Childcare	7

SAVE THE DATE FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Refugee Resettlement Program Annual Conference is a three-day event designed for refugees, service providers and community members (such as volunteers and mentors) interested in learning more about the refugee process.

May 17-19, 2004

Arizona Golf Resort in Mesa

Those who attend this event will discover many helpful and informative workshops, and enjoy entertainment by various refugee groups.

If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please contact your agency or call (480) 893-6110; or e-mail program@kc-a.com. ■



A LETTER FROM THE STATE COORDINATOR

Dear Friends,

The impact of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States Refugee Resettlement Program has not swayed our state's refugee resettlement network from welcoming refugees and providing them with assistance that best facilitates their transition to economic and social self-sufficiency. These efforts have been recognized locally, nationally and internationally. Over the past year, Arizona Refugee Resettlement efforts have been prominently featured in *La Monde*, *GEO* (the German equivalent to National Geographic), *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, *The New York Times*, *The Seattle Times*, and *WIS News* in Columbia, South Carolina. Most of this recent coverage focuses on the arrival of the Somali Bantu refugees in Arizona, and is a testament to our state's welcoming spirit for a much-persecuted people who have endured centuries of slavery, oppression and maltreatment.

Arizona's refugee resettlement notoriety is not accidental. It is a transparent culmination of collaborative efforts of public and private community groups, faith-based missions, public officials, hard working volunteers, and some of the nation's best and most successful refugee service providers. Keeping these efforts going is no easy task, and one compounded by reduced refugee admissions, reductions in funding and the struggle for refugee serving agencies to remain solvent. When you are in the business of saving peoples' lives, however, no one gives in easily. Consequently, our state Refugee Resettlement Program is working closely with refugee service providers to develop responses that meet the broad and diverse needs of refugees during these challenging times. This edition of the Journal features a new service paradigm, Coordination-Services, that will meet a variety of refugees' transitional needs through strategic service planning and soundly coordinated service delivery. Our efforts will not stop here, as we have a long road ahead. The key to success will be focusing on and conviction of purpose, creative partnerships and linkages, and efforts to seek and secure non-traditional sources of funding and support.

Ultimately, refugees will continue to be well served in Arizona; they will persevere and succeed, and they will become vital, contributing members of our communities.

Sincerely,



Charles Shipman ■



REFUGEE Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal resettlement

The *Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal* is a quarterly publication produced by the Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program, which is federally funded and administered by the Arizona Department of Economic Security.

Currently, the publication is circulated to 400 program providers, members of the refugee community and other interested parties.

Editorial contributions are accepted. Materials will be edited for political and/or religious viewpoint, grammar, style and length. The Department of Economic Security reserves the right to refuse any articles submitted. For editorial standards, please contact The Write Advantage, Inc. at (480) 941-8202 or e-mail at editorial@write4biz.com.

The Department of Economic Security is not responsible for opinions or views stated in bylined articles.

ARIZONA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM
STATE COORDINATOR
AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Charles Shipman

PROJECT OFFICER
Gail Gibbons

PUBLICATION PRODUCTION
The Write Advantage, Inc.
(480) 941-8202
e-mail: vickie@write4biz.com

Copyright 2003 by the Arizona Department of Economic Security, which is solely responsible for the editorial content. All rights reserved.

Arizona Department of Economic Security
Community Services Administration
1789 W. Jefferson St., Site Code 086Z
P.O. Box 6123, Phoenix, AZ 85005
(602) 542-6600 • Fax: (602) 542-6400
www.de.state.az.us

For additional copies of the newsletter go to
www.de.state.az.us/links/csa_web/index.asp

This document available in alternate formats by
contacting the ADA Coordinator at (602) 542-6600.



FINDING SOLUTIONS: COORDINATION-TRAINING

Elizabeth II, Queen of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, once said, "It's all to do with the training; you can do a lot if you're properly trained." Truer words were never spoken. And it is especially so for the refugees we welcome into the United States each year.

Without proper training, obtaining and maintaining a job is nearly impossible. To become better-prepared for the competitive labor market, a refugee's goal is to become armed with enough knowledge to be a productive workplace contributor from day one.

Additionally, companies pay higher wages to employees who have more job-related training. Whether it's gained through years of experience in the workforce or through formal or vocational education, those who know more have more to offer their employers. Their knowledge is often rewarded with more substantial paychecks.

And while training is of significant importance, the ability to speak and understand English is also essential to employment. Undoubtedly, refugees who make learning English a priority will be among the first to land a job.

In an effort to help refugees obtain the powerful combination of proper training and mastering the vocabulary necessary to their jobs, the Refugee Resettlement Program has instituted a new Training Program. Catholic Social Services of Phoenix (CSSP), in Maricopa County, and the Pima Community College Adult Education (PCC), in Pima County, were awarded these contracts.

As of Sept. 1, 2003, CSSP's mission is to help refugees proceed with professional careers in their area of expertise or interest so that they can increase their self-sufficiency by securing enhanced employment.

The process begins when refugees meet with their case managers to complete and submit the training application. CSSP then determines what education

the refugees obtained in their homeland, refers them to an entity that can validate their degrees and advises the refugees as to what additional education requirements they need to ensure their credentials are acknowledged in the United States.

CSSP then helps enroll the refugees in the appropriate courses. One course of action is to enroll the refugee in ESL (English as a Second Language) courses, a program subcontracted through the Arizona Lost Boys Center. In addition to ESL, the Center provides limited computer classes and citizen preparation courses, and workshops designed to enhance the refugees' ability to discover careers that are available to them.

"We were advised to initiate ESL classes as soon as possible," said Dr. Barbara Klimek, Resettlement Director, CSSP. "We believe that we have that component in place and it's running well." Additionally, Dr. Klimek explains that they are in the midst of developing a connection with educational facilities, such as Maricopa Community College District, and hope to have those programs up and running soon.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is subcontracted to conduct workshops in Phoenix on such topics as "Opening Your Own Business" and "Managing Your Finances," while the Phoenix Police Department offers workshops on basic laws in the United States. CSSP provides a quarterly calendar listing the available workshops.

CSSP provides additional services, such as training and orientation programs to the community at large.

continued on page 6



The Tucson International Alliance of Refugee Communities (TIARC) has teamed up with Pima Community College to train refugees on the use of computers. These Somali Bantu boys attend classes twice a week to learn basic keyboarding skills. Once they have become proficient at typing, they move on to learning programs such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

AN INTRODUCTION TO AN AMERICAN TRADITION

Celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday with refugees from different communities has become one of TIARC's traditions. Sponsored by



TIARC, IRC and LSMS (Lutheran Social Ministry of the Southwest), the annual Thanksgiving Dinner for Refugees is a great opportunity for refugees and service

providers to meet in a warm holiday atmosphere, and also for the service providers to become more familiar with the refugee population in Tucson.

On Nov. 22, 2003, about 160 refugees from Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Liberia, Somali, countries of the former Soviet Union and Sudan attended this year's annual event. The newly arrived refugees enjoyed the chance to be introduced to the American tradition of a Thanksgiving celebration. Refugees brought traditional foods and many wore traditional clothing, which added even more flavor to make this an exciting and special event.

A special thanks to Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church for hosting the dinner, and to the sponsor agencies and volunteers who put forth a lot of effort to make this special event happen. ■



Approximately 160 Tucson refugees attended the 2003 annual Thanksgiving Dinner. Hosted by Grace St. Paul's Church, refugees enjoyed plates full of turkey and all the foods typically associated with this holiday.



RESTRUCTURED RRP

continued from page 1

The most significant change in the new plan is the collaboration of refugees, refugee service providers and Coordination-Services providers to develop separate Coordination-Services plans for Maricopa and Pima Counties. These services were divided into three areas:

- Coordination-Childcare
- Coordination-Training
- Coordination-Transportation

"By aligning supportive responses under the Coordination-Services," said Shipman, "RRP integrated flexibility to facilitate the modification of a wide array of services based on refugees' needs, the level of funding and federal poverty levels."

In addition to the Coordination-Services that work directly with the refugees, the following services were also contracted to support refugee resettlement efforts in:

- Communication Education and Information-Journal: the creation, production and distribution of the *Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal* on a quarterly basis
- Communication Education and Information-Resource Guide: the updating of the Arizona Refugee Resource Guide in Maricopa and Pima Counties, its translation into several languages and the publication and distribution of these versions
- Program Development-State Conference: the planning, organizing, conducting, analyzing and reporting of an annual Arizona State Refugee Conference

Throughout this issue, you will find detailed stories on the three Coordination-Services programs as well as personal accounts demonstrating how these new programs are already making positive changes for Arizona refugees. ■

FINDING SOLUTIONS: COORDINATION-TRANSPORTATION

For many refugees, finding a job is of the utmost importance. But how does one go about finding and retaining employment without an available form of transportation? Many refugees do not know how to operate a vehicle, lack the financial resources to purchase, maintain or repair their vehicles, and are unaware of or unable to afford public transportation options. Acknowledging this need for transportation assistance, the Refugee Resettlement Program has implemented a new Transportation Program.

While refugees may desire transportation assistance to participate in a multitude of activities, this program focuses primarily on work-related transportation, and transportation to training or for limited, special medical services.

The organizations awarded the contracts for this program are Catholic Community Services (CCS) in Pima County and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Maricopa County.

These two agencies are now providing short-term transportation assistance as well as assistance in finding long-term transportation solutions through several basic components:

Bus passes/tickets. Because maximizing resources is a key concern, bus passes are the first choice for refugee clients due to their economic sensibility. Along with the passes, a listing of public transportation services in the various communities is also available.

Van services. This option is used primarily for clients who work outside normal business hours, when public transportation is not available. These shuttles can carry up to four passengers at a time who have identical destinations.

Auto repair. As part of this service, clients are provided with up to \$500 for services such as car battery or tire replacement (does not include general maintenance) and a preferred vendor list of about 20 reputable auto repair shops.

Bicycles. Available to those who have to walk more than a mile to get to public transportation, bicycles can be ridden to the bus stop and then mounted on the front of a bus during transport to work. St. Vincent DePaul has donated 48 bicycles (including helmets and locks) to the IRC for the first half of

continued on page 6

A LOOK AT THOSE IN NEED

The following stories highlight solutions that the Refugee Resettlement Program's new Transportation Program has provided to refugees during the first few months of the program. Because of this new program, they have the transportation resources available to travel to work each day or attend job interviews and on-the-job training.

CAR REPAIR GETS A MAN BACK TO WORK

A young man, who arrived in the United States in August 2003, recently purchased a car in need of brake repair. Knowing that this problem needed to be taken care of quickly, he took his paperwork to the IRC/Phoenix, used the list of approved garages to obtain an estimate for the repair, received approval from the transportation program and had new brakes installed that same afternoon. Showing a tremendous amount of perseverance, this young man was able to expedite the repair process to completion without even missing any time from work.

BICYCLING TO WORK MEANS MORE MONEY

A Ukrainian man in his 30s, who secured employment at Bombardier Aerospace in Tucson, was having trouble finding transportation to and from work. He was given the opportunity to pick up

overtime hours working evenings and weekends, however the public transportation he relied on during the week was not available during off-peak hours. And even when he used the public transportation during normal business hours, the bus stopped roughly a mile from where he worked — meaning a long walk was in store for him each day.

A bicycle from Catholic Community Services Transportation Program solved his transportation problems: he now bikes to work on the evenings and weekends and no longer has to endure the walk to work from the bus stop. More importantly, he was able to pick up the extra evening and weekend shifts and is earning more money than before.

THREE SIBLINGS BIKE TO WORK

A woman and her two brothers, all in their 20s, arrived in the United States with their parents in November 2003. Aside from spending time caring for their parents, all three siblings found employment stewarding in a hotel and are saving money to buy a car together. The three are learning English quickly and are determined to become self-sufficient as soon as possible.

To ease their transportation issues, the IRC/Phoenix has provided them with bus passes when public transit is available and van transport when it's not. Additionally, each of the siblings has been provided with a bicycle, which is most helpful on the weekends and when they get off work late at night. ■

... IT'S ALL TO DO WITH THE TRAINING

continued from page 3

CSSP believes this should help enhance the knowledge and ability of schools and employers to work effectively with those from different cultural backgrounds. CSSP conducts presentations to employers who request them, and sends flyers announcing the workshops to the appropriate clientele. CSSP also offers cultural competency training to medical and mental health professionals to help determine appropriate treatment with emphasis on the various cultures of refugees.

A little further south, Pima Community College Adult Education offers similar services to its clients in Tucson. PCC provides two tiers of ESL classes held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The first is an entry-level course for beginners that offers English training through computer software accessible via the Internet. The second class, at the intermediate level, focuses more on reading and writing. As an example of the special attention paid to various refugee groups, PCC offers ESL classes specifically for the Somali Bantus, as their needs are different from other refugees.

Every Thursday, PCC holds workshops that help refugees become more adapted to life in the United States. These workshops offer life skills, such as work ethics, shopping, using computers and using public resources such as the library.

Because many refugees stop attending ESL classes when they begin working, PCC offers English training at work through the Workplace Education Project. Currently in place at University Medical Center, the

employer determines the curriculum and focuses on the specific vocabulary necessary for that job. These classes, held on-site for convenience, will soon begin at Ventana Canyon Resort and La Paloma.

Additionally, the school is planning a pilot project of expedited employment training. The target audience is Liberians and other refugees who speak English but can't read or write. This English training is projected to entail 80 hours of intensive education.

PCC utilizes the expertise of other agencies to work in tandem with its program. For example, the College subcontracts Tucson International Alliance of Refugee Communities (TIARC) for driver's education; computer training; financial planning workshops for women; and offers help with resume preparation and conducts mock interviews. Likewise, the IRC Tucson office offers micro-enterprise classes for helping refugees who are entrepreneurs or looking to become entrepreneurs.

Both counties offer the Healthy Family Program (provided by Jewish Family and Children Services in Pima County, and administered by the CSSP in Maricopa County), which is charged with supporting orientation, education and counseling to help maintain healthy marriages, promote responsible fatherhood and maintain the well-being of families. By providing different workshops and educational opportunities to enhance communication between spouses, and between parents and their children, this program hopes to teach refugees to effectively communicate to build and maintain a successful relationship.

"This training establishment is very successful," says Masha Gromyko, Program Manager with PCC, "but results are hard to see yet." While these services are still in the infant stage, a large number of refugees are sure to benefit from these services. ■

CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY PARTY

On Dec. 20, 2003, TIARC held its annual Refugee Children's Holiday Party, hosted by St. Mark's Presbyterian Church. About 50 children from different refugee communities enjoyed the party and refreshments, were happy to meet Santa, and were grateful for their gifts and colorful balloons.



Roughly 60 gifts were distributed through the case managers and delivered to those families who could not attend the party.

Thank you to the TIARC volunteers who donated their time to help with the party preparations. ■

TRANSPORTATION

continued from page 5

2004; CCS has purchased three bicycles for its refugee clients so far.

Gas stipend. Working as a debit card, gas vouchers offer up to \$50 per month for refugees who are beginning a new job.

Additionally, future plans call for carpooling assistance. Carpooling is a viable option for refugees who have become established in the workforce and can coordinate with their coworkers to share the ride.

Having helped a combined total of more than 100 refugees thus far, these agencies have already received a lot of positive feedback on the effectiveness of the new transportation program and look forward to serving many more clients in the same manner. ■

FINDING SOLUTIONS: COORDINATION-CHILDCARE

Oftentimes, refugee parents are in need of childcare when they are at work, engaged in vocational or on-the-job training, taking ESL classes or attending medical appointments. However, these parents need to feel comfortable about their children spending the day away from them, knowing they are safe and well-cared for. The Refugee Resettlement Program has responded to this need by offering a new childcare program to help defray the costs of childcare incurred by clients as they transition to economic self-sufficiency.

When a refugee family decides to seek a solution to its childcare needs, eligibility for subsidy assistance

must first be decided. That determination is based on the following: a client's gross monthly income must be less than 165 percent of the Federal Poverty Level based on family size; and a client must have been denied childcare by DES or put on a waiting list. Eligible clients can receive a maximum of 132 full-time or part-time days of childcare within a 24-month period for children under 13 years of age.

The new two-part childcare program is comprised of the Refugee Childcare Subsidy Program and the development and implementation of a three-year childcare plan. Both

programs are available in Maricopa and Pima counties.

In Maricopa County, the Association for Supportive Child Care (ASCC) has been awarded the contract for this program. The first step in helping a client obtain childcare is to determine that client's eligibility. For this task, the ASCC subcontracts Catholic Social Services of Phoenix (CSSP). Next, the client is provided with information about the various types of childcare available. Finally, the child is lined up with a provider that is best-suited for the placement, based on cultural sensitivity and linguistic considerations.

With hopes of placing approximately 40 children in 2004, ASCC has compiled a list of several hundred possible providers from which to choose. The abundance of choices affords ASCC the option of placing children in more traditional daytime facilities or making arrangements for children whose parents work late-night shifts.

The Pima County contract has been awarded to the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The IRC works closely with the Voluntary Agencies to educate them on the available services. The IRC follows the

same step-by-step process as ASCC, however, the determination of eligibility is handled in-house.

Aside from helping clients access short-term childcare for job training, job interviews, mental health counseling and cultural orientations, the IRC also assists clients in enrolling in Head Start, joining Boys & Girls Clubs and other community programs.

IRC is currently assisting five families with full-time childcare, and hopes to serve 26 clients this year. With seven childcare providers to currently choose from, and a continued exploration of additional centers, the IRC can meet various clients' needs (work schedules, location, etc.) as they arise.

To implement the second part of the program, the development of a three-year childcare plan, both counties have organized a planning committee comprised of refugee resettlement agencies, Mutual Assistance Associations, childcare service providers, volunteers, community leaders and refugees. Currently in the early stages of development, these committees are charged with creating new programs that supplement existing childcare and offer childcare alternatives. ■

See additional childcare information on page 8

CHOOSING IN-HOME CHILDCARE

Some refugee parents would like the option of staying home with their children and earning money to watch other children. If a refugee family expresses interest in providing in-home childcare, they can begin the process to become certified by the state through the Department of Economic Security (DES).

The first step in this certification process, for residents of Maricopa County, is to contact Ninos en Mi Casa ("Children in My House"), a program within the ASCC. The client will then participate in a phone screening/interview to ensure they understand what requirements the process entails: child proofing, immunization, background checks, fingerprints, references, etc. Next, the client attends two half-day orientation classes, which focus on the specific details and necessary paperwork. Upon completion of this class, the client is assigned to a specialist from Ninos en Mi Casa, who conducts a home visit to make sure the client is in compliance with all the requirements. Upon a satisfactory visit, the client's file is sent to DES for certification. DES then reviews the file and schedules an appointment for a certification visit to the client's home.

This process, which takes between 60 and 90 days to complete, provides certification for up to four children, with a maximum of six in the home. As a safety precaution, a home must be on the ground floor with two exits, or on a higher floor with two exits to the ground floor. Additional safety measures must also be taken, such as pools being properly fenced, pets having had rabies shots, and the availability of a back-up provider. ■

... a new

Childcare Program

helps to defray the

costs of childcare

incurred by refugees.

A LOOK AT TWO FAMILIES IN NEED OF CHILDCARE

The following stories highlight the solutions that the Refugee Resettlement Program's (RRP) new childcare program has provided to two families. Through its efforts, these two families are enjoying a higher quality of life by working or attending educational classes, and heading toward economic self-sufficiency.

HELPING A SINGLE DAD

The International Rescue Committee recently served a man and his two children, a one-year-old girl and a four-year-old boy. He arrived in the United States in late 1999 from the Republic of Congo. Though he had to leave his wife and son behind during the escape, they joined him a few months later. With both parents finally in the United States and employed, the family was doing well.

However, in late 2002, his wife gave birth to their daughter, and passed away several months later due to complications suffered from childbirth. His wife's death put tremendous strain (both emotional and financial) on him and his family, and finding affordable childcare seemed impossible.

Before learning about the new child care program, the man relied on neighbors and friends to care for his children while he was at work. Because of the RRP's new program, his daughter now attends preschool full-time while his son attends preschool in the afternoons and participates in another program at an elementary school in the mornings.

RENEWING HOPE IN A YOUNG COUPLE

The Association for Supportive Child Care (ASCC), which placed its first few clients at the end of January, has already helped a young Ethiopian couple with an infant daughter. While the husband found a job six months after they arrived in the United States, lack of money forced his wife to stay home to care for their daughter. Her dream of learning a skill for employment led the couple to the discovery of subsidized child-care. She now attends Maricopa Skills Center, where she is learning business machine skills. She is so dedicated to this opportunity, that she takes three buses every day to get to her new school.



Arizona Department of Economic Security
Community Services Administration
1789 W. Jefferson St.
P.O. Box 6123, Site Code 086Z
Phoenix, AZ 85005

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SCOTTSDALE, AZ
PERMIT NO. 195